

SREB

High School to College and Careers:

Aligning State Policies

2007

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Regional
Education
Board

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A FOCUS REPORT IN THE *CHALLENGE TO LEAD* SERIES

This focus report on state policies was prepared by a team of SREB staff members under the direction of Joan M. Lord, director of Educational Policies. Matthew Lenard, research associate, prepared the state profiles. Lynn Cornett, senior vice president, guides SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals work.

This report is part of the *Challenge to Lead* education goals series, directed by Joan Lord. A full list of the goals, with publications describing SREB states' progress toward them, is printed on the inside back cover. For more information, e-mail joan.lord@sreb.org. *Goals for Education: Challenge to Lead* also is available on the SREB Web site at www.sreb.org.

High School to College and Careers:

Aligning State Policies 2007

All recent high school graduates have solid academic preparation and are ready for postsecondary education and a career.

One of the *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education

SREB's *Challenge to Lead* sets ambitious goals to help your state improve student readiness for college and careers. Improving the readiness of all high school students for postsecondary education and work is difficult. But SREB is committed to providing SREB states with information and tools to keep a strong focus on this important effort and to make a difference. *Getting Students Ready for College and Careers*, a related report from the *Challenge to Lead* series, lays out the issues on this topic and chronicles the progress and best practices in SREB states. But it also shows the long way yet to go.

Getting Students Ready for College and Careers recommends better alignment of the policies that guide students from high school to college and careers. Building on that report, this report provides a one-page summary of your state's current policies, programs and requirements for high school completion and readiness for college study, including:

- high school graduation requirements;
- early outreach programs (both federally funded and state-sponsored) that encourage students in the middle grades and high school to prepare for college;
- joint enrollment opportunities that enable high school students to take college-level courses and earn college credit;
- college admission and placement requirements;
- feedback reports through which colleges notify individual high schools of how their graduates performed in college; and
- state financial aid priorities and statewide, merit-based scholarship programs for all students who meet specific criteria.

More importantly, it helps you as a state leader answer three key questions about improving student access to college and careers.

- Are the policies regarding high school standards and assessments and college readiness in your state coordinated to smooth transitions from secondary to postsecondary education?
- Do high school standards, courses and assessments in your state prepare students for success in college freshman courses? Or are too many high school graduates in your state placed in college remedial courses?
- Do your state policies encourage high school students to use their senior year productively, or do these policies allow many seniors to waste their last year of high school?

Making College- and Career-Readiness Standards Integral to High School Standards, Curriculum and Assessments ---

States are facing a dual challenge of increasing high school graduation rates and ensuring that all high school graduates are ready for college and careers. The challenge is great: About one in four ninth-graders across the nation does not graduate from high school, and ACT estimates indicate that between 60 percent and 70 percent of high school graduates are not academically well-prepared for college.

Several states have made progress in aligning high school course requirements with college admission criteria. Some states have raised their statewide academic standards with the goal of getting more students ready for college. A few are moving toward incorporating these strengthened college- and career-readiness standards into their state high school tests. However, no state has done it all. **Each SREB state needs to develop readiness standards and incorporate them explicitly into high school teaching and testing.**

What steps can your state take to make it happen? As states grapple with how to help all students graduate from high school, they need at the same time to emphasize the goal of college and career readiness for all graduates. To prevent confusion, states should clarify the distinction between college admission and readiness for college study. Even though all high school graduates will not be admitted to selective universities, all should be ready to continue learning beyond high school, whether they plan to attend college or go directly into the job market. Even the workplace requires readiness for higher-level learning in today's economy.

Teachers and students need to know concretely the level of learning skills needed for college and career readiness. Right now, many students who take the required high school courses and earn good grades are not ready for college and careers. Many courses are not rigorous enough and do not expect enough from students. States need to develop and adopt college- and career-readiness standards that clearly specify for teachers the skills and knowledge students will need as a foundation for learning beyond high school. In short, **SREB states need to link readiness standards directly to classroom teaching, and they need to develop statewide high school tests that measure students' progress toward meeting these standards.**

Readiness standards provide tremendous benefits to states. Standards help states move beyond lists of course requirements for high school graduation and help them focus on the levels of performance students need in reading, writing and mathematics to be ready for postsecondary learning and work. Readiness standards also provide a basis for better tests that measure a wider range of skills and knowledge, including college readiness. These new tests should replace many of the current high school tests (particularly high school graduation tests), which generally do not adequately measure students' college and career readiness. More importantly, readiness standards provide clear direction so that teachers have the information they need to help students strengthen their knowledge and skills before the senior year. More students will enter college well prepared for study, reducing the need for remediation. Better-prepared students are more likely to stay in college and complete their degrees, leading to more highly skilled jobs and more productive careers with high salaries — in higher tax brackets.

Promising work toward creating readiness standards and assessments is under way. About six years ago, a few states began to address college and career readiness using a performance, standards-based approach. This means that all policies that guide college and career readiness are based on a common understanding of what students need to know and be able to do at each level of education before moving on to the next. These states organized statewide or systemwide initiatives to define college-readiness standards and to link these standards to high school assessments. In 2005, the National Governors Association sponsored the National Education Summit on High Schools, which culminated in a call for higher standards for high schools. Since then, a number of SREB states have been working with Achieve Inc.'s American Diploma Project on defining college- and career-readiness standards and aligning them with school curriculum.

How far have states come in setting and implementing clear college- and career-readiness standards and assessments? The answer is, disappointingly, not very far. Only a few states across the nation have made significant strides. SREB states need to quicken the pace of their work to help more students graduate from high school ready for college and careers. SREB

states need to lead by establishing state-level policies that engage all public schools, colleges and universities in advancing common but specific postsecondary readiness standards based on the following actions:

1. **The state's public schools and colleges should develop a single set of reading, writing and mathematics standards that signal what it means for students to be ready for postsecondary education.** Creating such standards may require new state policies or legislation directing state education leaders to take on this work. Without these statewide standards to guide their work, high school teachers will continue to be confused by the lack of (or different) definitions of readiness coming from various colleges in a state. Only by having all of public postsecondary education reach consensus on a single set of readiness standards can a state provide high school teachers with useful guidance about what it takes to prepare students for college and careers.
2. **States need to adopt and embed college- and career-readiness standards in the state high school curriculum.** The readiness standards should be *an integral part of state high school standards, not just aligned or correlated with them*. When state boards of education adopt high school standards, the readiness standards should be a part of them — identifiable, but not separate. Middle grades and high school teachers need an integrated set of standards for the knowledge and skills they teach. Having fully integrated readiness standards can eliminate confusion for teachers and help them bring students' work to required levels for graduation.
3. **All public colleges and universities, including community colleges, should adopt the readiness standards and use them to determine students' course placement based on their readiness for college-level work.** States also need to clarify that readiness is not about college admission and that setting readiness standards does not mean that access will be reduced. The goal is to have more students fully ready for college so that more students can begin study without remediation.
4. **States should test student performance on the college- and career-readiness standards while students are still in high school — *before the senior year*.** This strategy will give students who fall short a chance to strengthen their performance during the senior year. The state should test for the readiness standards as a part of high-profile assessments in the state — preferably ones that are a part of the state accountability system. Teachers and students already take these tests seriously. High-stakes graduation tests do not include the kind of rigorous standards that measure college and career readiness. Many SREB states already have (and others are moving toward) state-developed, end-of-course exams; a few are developing them in 11th-grade English and Algebra II, which may be used to measure college and career readiness. A state should use the ACT or SAT college admission tests to determine students' readiness *only if* the standards on which they are

based are incorporated fully into the state's high school academic standards. Simply correlating the ACT or SAT results with existing high school standards does not lead to specific enough information for teachers to use in helping students improve their knowledge and skills.

5. **States need to provide substantial professional development to help teachers understand the standards and know how to incorporate the standards into classroom teaching.** Teachers need these explicit benchmarks to help them gauge the rigor of courses and more effectively help all students meet the standards. States should go beyond merely providing academic standards and course descriptions and move toward creating a shared understanding among high school teachers and college faculty of the expected levels of student performance.

These five steps constitute an agenda for improving college readiness. What can state policymakers do to put it into motion? They can signal — through legislation, resolution, regulation or budget action — that college and career readiness is one of the state's highest priorities and that it requires a long-term and sustained commitment of K-12 and post-secondary education.

In the past several years, SREB states have made solid progress in preparing more students for college and careers. But we now know how to accomplish this work more effectively. To lead the nation in educational progress, SREB states need to enact a college- and career-readiness agenda.

State Profiles

These criteria were used to create your state profile:

- **Only fully adopted policies are included.** Proposals are not cited. Policies that have been approved, however, are indicated, even if they will be phased in over several years.
- Notes about course requirements for both high school graduation and college admission are the most detailed in areas that differ among states. **These notes do not include every nuance of state regulations.**
- **Early outreach programs are included only if they are statewide in scope.** While many postsecondary institutions and local school districts have launched more focused efforts, this report examines only programs that are designed to reach all students in target populations.

- Every SREB state's colleges and universities recognize Advanced Placement (AP) and College Level Examination Program (CLEP) scores and the International Baccalaureate (IB) curriculum as ways that students can earn college credit while they are in high school or when they first enroll in college. **Policies that promote such credit (AP, CLEP or IB) are not cited, except when they are linked strategically to other programs or policies.**
- All 16 SREB states have need-based scholarship programs designed to increase educational access for students from low- and middle-income families. **The state-by-state analyses include the percentages of state financial aid budgets that are dedicated to need-based aid,** based on data reported by states to the SREB-State Data Exchange for the 2005 school year.
- The information also includes descriptions of selected merit-based aid programs. **Only statewide scholarship programs that are based at least partially on merit are described.** All SREB states also have established college savings plans based on Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Service code. These plans, generally referred to as 529 college savings plans, provide tax incentives to save money for college expenses. In the description of early outreach programs, the state-by-state analyses address the means that states use to ensure that all students know about financial aid opportunities.

Alabama

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses ¹	Diploma	Diploma+ ²	AA ³
English/language arts	4	4	4
Mathematics ⁴	4	4	4
Science ⁵	4	4	4
Social studies	4	4	4
Physical education	1	1	1
Health education	.5	.5	.5
Arts education	.5	.5	.5
Computer applications ⁶	.5	.5	.5
Foreign language ⁷	0	2	0
Electives	5.5	3.5	5.5
Total	24	24	24

Notes: (1) Students with disabilities may earn the Alabama Occupational Diploma (not shown above). (2) High School Diploma with Advanced Academic Endorsement. (3) Alternate Adult High School Diploma. Course requirements are the same as for the high school diploma. It is awarded to students who do not pass the graduation test but do pass the GED test while in high school. (See **High school graduation test**.) (4) Includes Algebra I and geometry for the high school diploma; Diploma+ also requires Algebra II with trigonometry. (5) Includes biology and physical science. (6) Local boards of education may waive the computer requirement if the student demonstrates competency; the elective requirement will increase by one half-unit. (7) Diploma+ students must complete two credits of the same language.

High school graduation test: Alabama requires students to pass five comprehensive, state-developed subtests to earn diplomas or Diplomas+. The Alabama High School Graduation Exam includes sections on reading, language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. Students first take the test during the spring of 10th grade to assess their strengths and weaknesses; official testing begins in the 11th grade. If a student passes a subtest in 10th grade, the student is not required to retake that subtest. Students have at least six opportunities to take the subtests they have not yet passed before graduation. Students may continue to take the portions of the exam they have not passed after finishing 12th grade and may receive remediation until age 21. Students who do not ultimately pass all five subtests may receive the Alternate Adult High School Diploma if they complete all curriculum requirements and pass the GED test.

Early Outreach Programs

AlabamaMentor is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.alabamamentor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school sophomores, juniors and seniors may enroll concurrently in two-year colleges. Participants generally must have 3.0 high school grade-point averages. Students enrolled concurrently at universities must be juniors or seniors and must meet admission test criteria set by the institutions. Students who are pursuing dual enrollment courses in occupational or technical programs generally must maintain 3.0 GPAs in program-related courses and 2.5 overall. All such students must have the approval of parents and high school officials. Institutions and local school systems may form agreements to provide opportunities for students to earn college credit as well as high school credit for college courses. Accelerated students may enroll in college (without concurrent high school enrollment) after the sophomore year in high school.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

College/university admission requirements: Admission requirements are set by the governing boards of the universities.

College/university placement requirements: Placement criteria are established by the governing boards of the institutions.

Community college admission requirements: For enrollment in associate's degree programs or courses that apply toward an associate's degree, a student must meet one of the following standards: (1) High school diploma (or Diploma+); the equivalent from another state or private, accredited institution; or a GED credential; (2) High school diploma equivalent to the Alabama diploma issued by a private high school, along with passing scores on all subtests of the Alabama High School Graduation Exam or an ACT score of 16 or an equivalent score on the SAT I; or (3) Alabama Occupational Diploma or equivalent with a minimum ACT score of 16 or an equivalent score on the SAT I. (See Note 1 under **High School Graduation Requirements**.) Students applying to vocational programs must demonstrate an ability to benefit from instruction.

Community college placement requirements: The Alabama College System (two-year) requires that institutions use scores on the ASSET or COMPASS tests to assess students unless students meet minimum scores on the SAT I (480 critical reading and 480 math) or the ACT (20) within three years of high school graduation. The system chancellor recommends minimum scores on the ASSET or COMPASS tests for college placement.

Feedback Reports

The Alabama Commission on Higher Education provides feedback reports to the state's high schools. The Commission tracks how many Alabama high school graduates enroll the following fall and to which two- and four-year institutions they matriculate. It also lists the feeder high schools for each public senior and two-year college. Each high school also receives a report that includes the number of students in postsecondary education and the number of students taking remedial courses.

The University of Alabama System reports on students who enter its institutions. It provides information on the number of high school graduates attending college, the proportion admitted, the results of college admission and placement tests, the number and percentage enrolled in remedial courses, the number enrolling in advanced courses, and performance in freshman courses.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 62 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Alabama were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

Alabama does not sponsor a statewide, merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria, but it does offer a number of targeted, non-need-based scholarships.

Arkansas

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	College-Prep ¹
English	4
Mathematics ²	3
Science ³	3
Social studies ⁴	3
Physical education	.5
Health and safety	.5
Oral communications	.5
Fine arts	.5
Career-focus electives ⁵	6
Total	21

Notes: (1) For the 2009 graduating class, this curriculum will be called "Core" and will require four units of math and a total of 22 units for graduation. For the 2010 graduating class, a default curriculum called "Smart Core" will be added. It will specify Algebra II as one of the four required math courses. Parents may waive this course, which will place their student in the Core. (2) Algebra I, geometry and one higher-level math course. (3) At least one unit each of biology and physical science. (4) One unit each of world history and U.S. history, and one-half unit of civics or government. Smart Core will require a full unit of civics or civics/American government. (5) Counselors in the local school district establish these electives based on students' work aspirations.

High school graduation test: Arkansas does not require students to pass a statewide test to graduate from high school. The state administers a high school literacy test in the 11th grade and end-of-course (EOC) exams in Algebra I and geometry. These exams are used both to gauge school accountability and to give students feedback. Students who do not reach proficiency are given remediation and three subsequent attempts on any of the three required exams. Beginning in fall 2009, students must pass the EOC exams in order to graduate.

Early Outreach Programs

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education, in conjunction with the State Board of Education, offers ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) for eighth- and 10th-grade students.

Arkansas is developing ArkansasMentor, a statewide portal that will provide access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site will be www.arkansasmentor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school students may enroll concurrently in college courses. Students must meet institutional requirements for eligibility. Arkansas' early admission policy allows students who have not completed high school to enroll full time in college, usually after the junior year. Students must meet institutional requirements for admission.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: For admission, a student must earn a high school diploma or GED credential. For unconditional admission, students must complete the core curriculum requirements (CCR) defined below. Those students working toward the Academic Challenge Scholarship must meet the requirements identified below as CCR+. (See **State Need- and Merit-Based Aid**.)

Courses	CCR ¹	CCR+ ²
English	4	4
Mathematics ³	4	4
Science ⁴	3	3
Social studies ⁵	3	3
Foreign language ⁶	0	2
Total	14	16

Notes: (1) Core curriculum requirements for unconditional admission. (2) Core curriculum requirements for Academic Challenge Scholarship. (3) Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry and one higher course. (4) All courses must be lab-based, chosen from physical science, biology, chemistry or physics. Only one course may be in life science. (5) Includes American history, world history, and one-half unit of civics or American government. (6) Two units in the same foreign language.

University placement requirements: Students must earn scores of at least 19 on the English, math and reading sections of the ACT (or equivalent scores on the ASSET, SAT or COMPASS) for placement in regular courses. First-time freshmen who do not complete the high school core curriculum with cumulative grade-point averages of 2.0 may receive conditional admission. During the first 30 semester hours, these students must take 12 hours of core academic courses and any necessary remedial courses, and they must maintain GPAs of 2.0.

Two-year college admission requirements: Students who are at least 17 years old and who pass institutional tests that demonstrate that they are able to benefit from instruction are eligible for admission as full-time students. Some programs require a high school diploma or GED credential. First-time freshmen who are seeking technical certificates or associate of applied science degrees and who did not complete the core curriculum are eligible for conditional admission. During the first 30 semester hours, these students must complete six hours of core academic courses and six hours of technical courses in their program (including remediation), and they must maintain GPAs of 2.0.

Two-year college placement requirements: Placement procedures vary by institution.

Feedback Reports

Feedback reports are coordinated with ACT Inc. The reports provide schools with information on how many and what percentages of high school graduates applied to college, were accepted and enrolled. They also include data on scores on college admission tests and college placement tests. They report on the proportion of students who complete the recommended core curriculum, high school GPAs and class ranks, and the number and percentage enrolled in college remedial courses.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 78 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Arkansas were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

If state funding is available, the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship program will pay students up to \$3,500 annually. The initial award is based on household income, the student's composite ACT score and high school GPA based on the CCR+. (See **University admission requirements**.) ACT and high school GPA requirements for scholarships to two-year and four-year institutions are shown below.

ACT Score	GPA for Four-Year Institutions	GPA for Two-Year Institutions
15-18	3.25	3.0
19	3.0	2.75
20-24	2.75	2.5
25-36	2.5	2.25

Recipients may renew the scholarship for up to three additional years based on GPA and hours earned.

Delaware

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	Diploma
English/language arts	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science	3
Social studies	3
Physical education	1
Health	.5
Computer literacy ²	1
Career pathway ³	3
Electives	3.5
Total⁴	22

Notes: (1) The graduating class of 2011 must complete four math courses, including a senior-year course equivalent to Algebra II. (2) Students receive computer literacy credit when they demonstrate competency. This credit will move to the middle grades curriculum beginning with the 2011 graduating class. (3) A career pathway is a planned program of courses designed to develop knowledge and skills in a particular career or academic area. (4) The graduating class of 2013 must complete two courses in a foreign language, for a total of 24 graduation credits.

High school graduation test: Delaware administers comprehensive exams in reading, writing and mathematics to 10th-grade students and in science and social studies to 11th-grade students. A formula weighs the student's mathematics, reading, science, social studies and writing scores on this test to establish an index. This index is used to award a distinguished diploma to students who perform well. This diploma will no longer be awarded after spring 2007.

Early Outreach Programs

Delaware was awarded an Advanced Placement Incentive Program Grant in October 2006. This grant is designed to prepare low-income and minority middle grades and high school students for success in AP courses and on exams. In addition, the grant will expand AP course options, enhance teacher preparation for effective AP course instruction and monitor student progress through a new support initiative.

Beginning in fall 2007, all eighth-grade students must participate in the Student Success Plan (SSP) as part of Delaware's new graduation requirements. The state is piloting this student planning and advisement program through a National Governors Association High School Honor States grant.

DelawareMentor is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.delawarementor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Academically advanced students may enroll concurrently in college courses while still in high school with the approval of the high school counselor and an ACCESS counselor.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: Admission to Delaware's two public universities is based on grades, class rank, test scores and recommendations from appropriate high school officials. An applicant must have a high school diploma and an overall C average in all required course units, shown at right. Delaware State University will consider admitting students who have completed a GED credential.

Courses	University of Delaware	Delaware State University
English/language arts	4	4
Mathematics ¹	3	3
Science ²	3	3
Social studies ³	4	2
Foreign language ⁴	2	0
Electives ⁵	2	4
Total	18	16

Notes: (1) DSU requires two courses in algebra and one course in geometry. (2) UD requires two lab-based units, and DSU requires all three. (3) UD requires one course in world history and at least one other history course. (4) Must be the same language for both credits. (5) Includes computer science or foreign language credits.

University placement requirements: At Delaware State University, students may be provisionally admitted if they do not meet regular admission requirements. Based on their high school records and test scores (SAT or ACT), they may be required to attend a pre-college, weeklong summer program, limit their course load and maintain contact with an education support program.

Community college admission requirements: Students must have a high school diploma or GED credential, or they must be 18 years old and pass institutional tests that demonstrate their ability to benefit from instruction.

Community college placement requirements: All students, except those with bachelor's degrees or who meet any of the minimum test score requirements (see below), must take standardized placement tests in reading, writing and mathematics. Results determine the level of instruction at which students begin college course work.

Test	Math Score	Reading/English Score
ACT	22	19 ¹
SAT	500	450 ²

Notes: (1) Average of reading and English subscores. (2) Critical reading.

Feedback Reports

Delaware's colleges and universities do not report to high schools about student admission, placement and performance.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 68 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Delaware were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

Delaware does not sponsor a statewide, merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria.

Delaware provides \$1,000 scholarships to up to 300 students in grade eight and up to 300 students in grade 10 who score the highest on the state tests in reading, writing or mathematics. Of these scholarships, half at each grade level are designated for students eligible for free and reduced-price lunches.

Delaware's Student Excellence Equals Degree (SEED) program offers high school graduates the opportunity to enroll in various college programs tuition-free. To qualify, graduates must have a 2.5 high school grade-point average and no felony convictions. They must enter a full-time associate's degree program at the University of Delaware or a program at Delaware Technical and Community College during the fall semester following high school graduation.

Florida

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	Standard ¹	Three-Year College-Prep ²	Three-Year Career-Prep
English	4	4	4
Mathematics ³	3	3	3
Science ⁴	3	3	3
Social science ⁵	3	3	3
Physical education/health	1	0	0
Life management skills	.5	0	0
Practical/fine arts ⁶	1	0	0
Foreign language ⁷	0	2	0
Vocational/career education ⁸	0	0	3/5
Electives	8.5	3	2/0
Total⁹	24	18	18

Notes: (1) Students graduating in 2011 must earn four math credits, four “major area of interest” credits, and four elective credits. Life management skills will be dropped. Total credits required for graduation will remain the same. (2) Six of the 18 units required for the college-prep diploma must be identified as academically rigorous (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and dual enrollment). (3) Standard diploma and three-year career-preparatory option includes Algebra I. Three-year college-preparatory option includes Algebra I and above. (4) Two of the three science courses must be lab-based. (5) Must include one credit in American history, one credit in world history, one-half credit in American government and one-half credit in economics. (6) Students must take one credit in either practical arts career and technical education or performing fine arts, or one-half credit in both. (7) Students must take two credits of the same second language or demonstrate competency in another language. Students graduating in 2011 will be required to take one credit in fine arts. (8) Students must complete three credits in a single vocational or career education program, three credits in career/technical certificate dual enrollment, or five credits in vocational or career/technical courses. Students choosing to take three credits in vocational/career education must take two elective units. Students choosing five vocational/career education courses take no electives. (9) Students in the standard diploma track must maintain a 2.0 grade-point average (GPA). Students in both three-year tracks must maintain a 3.0 GPA. Students who chose a three-year accelerated track prior to July 1, 2004, may continue the program based on the original requirements.

High school graduation test: Students must pass the reading and mathematics portions of the 10th-grade Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). The FCAT measures achievement on the state’s curriculum standards in reading, mathematics, writing and science. Students have multiple opportunities to earn passing scores and may use qualifying SAT or ACT subtest scores to override three failed attempts to pass a particular FCAT section.

Early Outreach Programs

The One Florida initiative promotes college readiness by providing support to low-income students through the College Reach-Out Program (CROP). One Florida encourages 10th-grade students to take the PSAT and seeks to increase the number of minority students in advanced and dual enrollment courses through targeted partnerships. (See **University and community college placement requirements.**)

FACTS.org is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.facts.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

To be eligible for dual enrollment in college courses, a high school student must have a 3.0 high school GPA and pass the Common Placement Test (CPT). For dual enrollment in vocational courses,

a student must have a 2.0 high school GPA and pass the CPT or take the Test for Adult Basic Education. Highly motivated students may be admitted to college in full-time early admission programs.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: Students must have high school diplomas or the equivalent. All students must complete 18 units:

Courses	Unit Requirements
English	4 (at least 3 with a substantial writing component)
Mathematics	3 (Algebra I and above)
Science	3 (at least 2 lab-based)
Social science	3
Foreign language	2 (sequential courses in same language)
Electives	3 (from above subject areas)

Florida has three routes to admission: (2) **Guaranteed admission to one of 11 public universities for graduates in the top 20 percent of their high school class** — GPA based on completing the 18-credit university admission requirements and the SAT or ACT to determine placement university. (2) **Traditional admission** — based on weighted GPAs in high school core and SAT or ACT scores. (3) **Profile Assessment** — Up to 10 percent of students may be admitted without meeting these requirements through a process that reviews factors including family educational background and socioeconomic status.

Community college admission requirements: Students must have high school diplomas, equivalency diplomas or demonstrate their ability to benefit from instruction.

University and community college placement requirements: Students with SAT or ACT scores below thresholds must take the Common Placement Test. (See chart below.) If they do not meet minimum scores on this test, they must take remedial courses.

Test	Math Score	Reading Score	English Score
ACT	19	18	17
SAT	440	440	Not applicable

Feedback Reports

Florida’s Office of Articulation provides high schools with information about the numbers and percentages of their graduates who have gone to college, their scores on placement tests and the numbers enrolled in remedial courses. The *Performance on the Common Placement Test* report provides assessment results for the CPT’s subtests across the state’s postsecondary institutions.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 22 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Florida were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

The Florida Bright Futures Scholarship provides awards at three levels. The **Scholar** award goes to students with 3.5 weighted GPAs in 15 college-prep units, SAT scores of 1270 or ACT scores of 28, and 75 hours of community service. The scholarship pays tuition and fees, plus \$300 per semester. The **Medallion** award requires a 3.0 weighted GPA in 15 college-prep units and either an SAT score of 970 or an ACT score of 20. The scholarship pays 75 percent of university tuition and fees and 100 percent of community college tuition and fees for associate’s degree-seeking candidates. The **Gold Seal Vocational** award requires college-prep and career-prep candidates to earn standard graduation requirements credits with 3.0 weighted GPAs. Career-prep students must also earn 3.5 unweighted GPAs in three vocational units within one program and meet the minimum SAT/ACT scores required to place out of remedial course work. The scholarship pays 75 percent of tuition and fees.

Georgia

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	CP ¹	CP+	TC	TC+
English	4	4	4	4
Mathematics ²	4	4	3	3
Science ³	3	3	3	3
Social studies	3	3	3	3
Health/physical education	1	1	1	1
Technology/arts/foreign language	1	1	1	1
Foreign language	2	2	0	0
Technology/career-prep	0	0	4	4
Electives	4	4	3	4
Additional core	0	2	0	1
Total⁴	22	24	22	24

Notes: (1) CP and CP+ mean college-preparatory and college-preparatory with distinction; TC and TC+ mean technology career-preparatory and technology career-preparatory with distinction. Graduation with distinction also requires a 3.0 grade-point average. (2) CP and CP+ require Algebra I and above; TC and TC+ must include Algebra I. (3) Lab-based. Includes physical and life sciences for CP, CP+ or TC+ diplomas. (4) Students also may obtain a Dual Seal Diploma by combining CP or CP+ with TC or TC+ diploma requirements.

High school graduation test: To earn diplomas, students must pass the comprehensive Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHS GT), which comprises five state-developed subtests: writing, English/language arts, mathematics, social studies and science. Students first take the tests in 11th grade and have five additional opportunities to retake subtests they have not yet passed. Georgia plans to phase out the GHS GT in favor of end-of-course (EOC) exams. EOC exams are administered in core subjects and count for 15 percent of the course grade. Students must pass these core subjects with grades of 70 percent or above.

Early Outreach Programs

Georgia funds a statewide dropout prevention program that offers a graduation coach to each of the state's 385 public high schools. All coaches are responsible for identifying trends within their assigned high school that contribute to low graduation rates and for helping to increase the graduation rate.

GAcollege411 is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.gacollege411.com.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school students may enroll jointly in college courses after the 10th grade. Students who have completed 11th grade may be admitted to college full time. Students participating in either the joint enrollment or early admission programs may qualify for reimbursement of college tuition by meeting the following minimum requirements: scores of at least 970 on the SAT I (or comparable ACT scores), completion of all college-prep requirements with minimum high school GPAs in college-prep courses (see **University System admission requirements**), and written consent from the parent/guardian.

Students also may enroll in secondary schools and Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education (DTAE) colleges while they are still in high school. Courses applicable to these dual enrollment programs do not supplant courses already offered in secondary schools and are required courses within a TC diploma program awarded by the technical college. Dual enrollment candidates must have met all technical college admission requirements for the selected program of study.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University System admission requirements: Admission to all institutions — including two-year colleges — is based on 16 college-prep units. These units must include Algebra I, Algebra II, geometry, one higher-level mathematics course and two years of the same foreign language. Students who meet certain requirements may enter two-year colleges with 13 units. Admission to four-year universities also is based on the Freshman Index.

Freshman Index (FI): The FI is a score based on a student's SAT or ACT score and on his or her GPA in the 16-unit college-prep curriculum.

$$\text{FI} = 500 \times (\text{high school GPA}) + \text{SAT critical reading} + \text{SAT math}$$

$$\text{FI} = 500 \times (\text{high school GPA}) + (\text{ACT composite} \times 42) + 88$$

Freshman Index Thresholds	Regular	Limited¹
Research university	2500	2020
Regional university	2040	1830
State university	1940	1790

Notes: (1) A few students may be admitted to a university with lower FI scores if they satisfy curricular requirements and meet minimum scores on placement tests. These students must have minimum SAT critical reading scores of 430 and math scores of 400. Certain provisions also permit the admission of those with TC diplomas.

University System placement requirements: Scores on the state's Collegiate Placement Exam (CPE) or ACT's COMPASS exam determine placement for degree-seeking students who have SAT critical reading scores below 430 or math scores below 400 (or ACT equivalents) or who did not meet the college-prep English or math requirements. Students who score below thresholds on the CPE or COMPASS are required to take remedial courses. Students admitted with deficiencies in high school science, foreign language or social studies must take courses in those subjects without earning credit.

Technical college admission and placement requirements: Students must take SAT's ASSET exam to determine placement. Thresholds for admission to associate's degree programs are comparable to the minimum COMPASS scores set by the University System. Provisionally admitted students must take remedial courses in core areas. Students admitted without high school diplomas must earn either regular diplomas or GED credentials before they can earn degrees.

Feedback Reports

The University System provides annual High School Feedback Reports to high schools on the academic progress of their graduates at the end of their first year at a System institution.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 1 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Georgia were categorized as need-based, although many HOPE scholarship recipients are students from low-income families. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

Georgia residents qualify for HOPE scholarships in two ways: (1) a 3.0 high school GPA based on the 16-unit college-preparatory curriculum or (2) a 3.2 high school GPA based on the 13-unit career/technology curriculum. Scholarship recipients at public colleges receive tuition. Contingent on lottery funding, they may receive fees and book allowances. Students at private colleges receive \$3,000 per academic year, in addition to \$1,000 Georgia Tuition Equalization Grants. Students also are eligible — without a GPA requirement — for HOPE grants for certificate and diploma programs at public institutions. The grant covers tuition and fees and includes a book allowance.

Kentucky

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses ¹	Diploma ²
English	4
Mathematics ³	3
Science ⁴	3
Social studies	3
Health	.5
Physical education	.5
Arts	1
Electives	7
Total	22

Notes: (1) Substitutions are allowed if alternative courses are rigorous and address similar components. (2) Kentucky awards its “high academic achievement” Commonwealth Diploma based on completion of the standard requirements above, if they incorporate the Precollege Curriculum (see **Postsecondary Admission/Placement** below), a four-credit AP (or IB) course of study, and completion of three AP (or IB) exams. (3) Includes Algebra I and geometry. Algebra II will be added for the 2008 freshman class. (4) Life, physical and earth/space sciences. Science classes will be lab-based for the 2008 freshman class.

High school graduation test: Kentucky does not require students to pass a statewide exam for high school graduation. Students take portions of the comprehensive Kentucky Core Content Test (KCCT) in 10th, 11th and 12th grades. Subtests of the KCCT include mathematics, science, social studies, reading, writing, arts and humanities, and practical living/vocational studies. Test scores are used only to gauge school accountability and to give students feedback. In spring 2008, certain districts will pilot end-of-course exams.

Early Outreach Programs

Kentucky administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program to prepare middle grades students for college and to create or expand programs to strengthen schools. Kentucky also administers the EXPLORE educational planning exam to eighth-grade students and the PLAN college-readiness test to 10th-graders. Beginning in fall 2007, the state will administer the ACT to all 11th-grade students and three WorkKeys assessments to participating 10th- through 12th-graders. The four assessments are part of ACT’s Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS).

The Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education sponsors the Kentucky Early Mathematics Testing Program, an online test for 10th- and 11th-grade students that is based on skills needed for college and includes topics from high school Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry. It provides students with information about deficiencies early so they can take steps in high school to prepare for college. The Kentucky Center for Mathematics also promotes mathematics achievement through intervention and mentoring programs.

GoHigher Kentucky is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.gohigherky.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Higher education institutions may permit high school students to take courses and admit them as full-time students if they meet admission requirements. Institutions also may arrange dual enrollment or articulation agreements with local school systems to give students the opportunity to earn high school and college credit.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: Students must have a high school diploma or GED credential, and they must take the ACT or SAT.

Courses	PCC ¹
English	4
Mathematics ²	3
Science ³	3
Social studies ⁴	3
Health	.5
Physical education	.5
Foreign language ⁵	2
Arts	1
Electives ⁶	5
Total	22

Notes: (1) The Pre-College Curriculum (PCC) is required for admission of first-time freshmen under age 21 who enroll in four-year programs at Kentucky public universities. Students who do not meet admission standards may be admitted provisionally. (2) Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry or higher-level courses. (3) Life, physical and earth/space sciences; one must be lab-based. (4) Students choose from courses in U.S. history, economics, government, world geography and world civilization. (5) Two units in the same foreign language. (6) At least three of the five elective courses must be considered rigorous.

Community/technical college admission requirements: Students must have a standard high school diploma or GED credential or must be eligible to pursue a GED credential.

University and community/technical college placement requirements: Students whose ACT (or SAT equivalent) subscores in reading, English or mathematics are below 18 must take placement tests and receive academic support. Students who do not meet score thresholds on these tests must take remedial or entry-level courses. Institutions may establish plans for students to meet all deficiencies and deadlines by which students must meet them. Kentucky guarantees that students who meet specified score thresholds on the ACT (or equivalent on SAT or COMPASS) in English and mathematics will be placed into appropriate credit-bearing courses.

Feedback Reports

Published biennially, the *Kentucky High School Feedback Report* is coordinated by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education and ACT Inc. It provides high schools with the numbers and percentages of their graduates who are enrolled in college and with the students’ ACT scores. It also compares students’ grade-point averages in high school and college and reports the percentages enrolled in remedial and advanced courses in English and math. In addition, the report includes information on freshmen credit-hours attempted and earned, and how many students return for a second year.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 46 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Kentucky were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

The Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority administers the Kentucky Educational Excellence Scholarship (KEES), which provides support for state residents based on their academic performance throughout high school. The value of a student’s KEES increases for each year of high school in which he or she maintains a 2.5 or higher GPA in the pre-college curriculum. (See **University admission requirements**.) Students also earn additional increases based on their highest ACT composite score (or the SAT equivalent). Students receive a scholarship equivalent to the total accumulated amount each year that they are enrolled in Kentucky postsecondary institutions, as long as they meet GPA requirements. To maintain the scholarship, they must earn a 2.5 GPA in the first year of college and hold a 3.0 cumulative GPA thereafter. The maximum annual award is \$2,500.

Louisiana

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	Diploma
English ¹	4
Mathematics ²	3
Science ³	3
Social studies ⁴	3
Physical education	1.5
Health	.5
Electives	8
Total	23

Notes: (1) Business English may substitute for English IV. (2) Includes Algebra I or Integrated Mathematics I. (3) Includes biology and a physical science. (4) Includes American history, civics and free enterprise.

High school graduation test: Louisiana requires students to pass three subtests of the comprehensive Graduation Exit Examination for the 21st Century (GEE 21). Students must pass the English/language arts and mathematics subtests and either science or social studies to meet graduation requirement. Students first take the subtests in 10th and 11th grades, and they receive remediation and multiple opportunities to retake subtests they have not yet passed before graduation.

Early Outreach Programs

The Louisiana Systemic Initiatives Program (LaSIP), in conjunction with the Board of Regents and the State Board of Elementary Education, administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program, which targets students in 11 school districts throughout the state. In addition, students in GEAR UP middle grades schools are eligible for college scholarships through the Rewards for Success Program (RFS).

The Louisiana Board of Regents also administers the Explore exam to eighth-grade students and the PLAN college-readiness test to 10th-graders through ACT's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS).

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Dual enrollment and early admission programs are available at two-year and four-year institutions. The eligibility requirements vary by institution.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: Admission requirements vary by institution. Universities may make exceptions to their admission policies for 5 percent to 10 percent of the freshman class, depending on the institution type.

All Louisiana public four-year universities require the Regents' Core Curriculum and are grouped into three categories that share minimum standards for ACT scores, high school grade-point averages and class rank. High school students must meet one of the criteria for an institutional group in order to be admitted to that type of institution.

	High School GPA	ACT	Class Rank
Flagship university	3.0	25	Top 10%
Statewide university	2.5	23	Top 25%
Regional university	2.0	20	Top 50%

Courses	Regents' Core Curriculum
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social studies ³	3
Foreign language ⁴	2
Computer technology	.5
Fine arts	1
Total⁵	16.5

Notes: (1) Algebra I, Algebra II, plus one higher. (2) Includes biology and chemistry. (3) American history, world history or geography, and civics/free enterprise. (4) Two units in the same language. (5) Students in the 2008 graduating class must earn one additional unit of math or science, for a total of 17.5 credits.

Community college admission requirements: Community colleges require high school diplomas, GED credentials or scores on institutional tests that indicate students are able to benefit from instruction.

University and community college placement requirements: Students at all institutions must earn at least 18 on the English and math sections of the ACT (or the equivalent on SAT, ASSET or COMPASS) for placement in entry-level courses.

Feedback Reports

The Louisiana Department of Education issues feedback reports on the number and percentage of graduates who are attending college and who are enrolled in college remedial courses, their scores on college admission tests, and the number completing the first semester in good standing.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 1 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Louisiana were categorized as need-based, although many TOPS scholarship recipients are students from low-income families. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) is based entirely on merit and has five categories of awards. Students must complete the Regents' Core Curriculum with specified GPAs and ACT (or SAT equivalent) scores.

Award Level	Core	ACT	SAT
Opportunity	2.5	20 ¹	940
Performance	3.5	23	1060
Honors	3.5	27	1210
Technical ²	2.5	17	810

Notes: (1) Equal to the prior year's state average ACT composite score or 20, whichever is greater. (2) Requires students to complete the TOPS technical core curriculum in which students may take either career-major courses or communications courses in lieu of the TOPS Core requirements in foreign language and fine arts.

At the Opportunity level, TOPS provides four years of public institution tuition or a comparable amount toward tuition at a private institution. At the Performance level, it pays a \$400 stipend in addition to tuition, and at the Honors level, it pays an \$800 stipend. The Technical award provides tuition for two years of an approved technical program. In order to renew TOPS each year, students must meet requirements specified at each award level. Students receiving either the Performance or Honors award will revert to the Opportunity level if they fail to meet requirements.

Maryland

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	Diploma
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social science ³	3
Health	.5
Physical education	.5
Fine arts	1
Technology education	1
Academic electives ⁴	2/4
Electives ⁴	3/1
Total⁵	21

Notes: (1) Includes algebra/data analysis and geometry. (2) Includes biology and at least two lab-based courses chosen from earth, life and physical sciences. (3) U.S. history, world history and local, state and national government. (4) Two units in foreign language or two units in advanced technology and three credits in electives, or four credits in a state-approved career and technology program and one credit in electives. (5) In order to graduate, students must also complete a 75-hour service-learning requirement.

High school graduation test: Maryland requires students to take end-of-course exams called the High School Assessments (HSAs) in four subjects: English II, government, algebra/data analysis and biology. Currently, these scores are reported on student transcripts. Students in the 2009 graduating class must make passing scores on the HSAs or on approved comparable assessments to graduate. They may use scores of 3 on qualifying AP exams or 4 on qualifying IB exams as passing scores. Students who do not pass an assessment will receive academic assistance from the local school system.

Early Outreach Programs

The Maryland State Department of Education and the Maryland Higher Education Commission administer a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program. The program targets 10 middle grades schools and has a mathematics focus.

MarylandMentor is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.marylandmentor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school students with outstanding academic records may enroll concurrently in college courses while in high school. Such students also may be admitted early to a University System of Maryland institution as long as they arrange to earn a high school diploma or the equivalent. Institutions that offer early admission determine their own procedures.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University System admission requirements: Students must earn high school diplomas or the equivalent and meet the minimum core content proficiency requirements listed at right. They also must submit SAT or ACT scores. Each University System institution determines its own admissions standards and may set its requirements higher than the systemwide minimums. Institutions may make exceptions to the minimum requirements for up to 15 percent of their incoming classes.

Courses	Minimum Requirements
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social science/history	3
Foreign language ³	2
Total	15

Notes: (1) Includes Algebra I or Applied Math I and II, logic or geometry, and Algebra II. (2) Units must be earned in at least two subject areas; two units must be lab-based. (3) Two units in the same language (may be earned in American sign language). Some institutions may allow students to substitute two units of advanced technology for the foreign language units.

University System placement requirements: Requirements vary by institution.

Community college admission requirements: Students must have high school diplomas or GED credentials or must demonstrate through testing that they can benefit from instruction.

Community college placement requirements: Students must take tests in English, mathematics and reading, as determined by the institution.

Feedback Reports

The Maryland Higher Education Commission's *Student Outcome and Achievement Report* to high schools combines information from the College Board and American College Testing Program with information from the state's public and independent colleges and universities. The report provides information about students who graduated from Maryland high schools and enrolled in Maryland postsecondary institutions. It compares the performance of students who did and did not complete a college-preparatory curriculum and identifies factors that predict how college freshmen will perform.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 76 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Maryland were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

Maryland's need-based Guaranteed Access Grant is awarded to high school students who complete a college-preparatory curriculum, maintain a minimum 2.5 grade-point average, meet family income guidelines and attend a two- or four-year Maryland college. The grant provides 100 percent of financial need, ranging from a minimum award of \$400 to a maximum of \$14,300. Any combination of multiple state awards may not exceed \$18,300. Maryland also offers an Educational Assistance Grant, which awards a maximum \$3,000 based on the expected family contribution.

Maryland does not sponsor a statewide, merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria, but it does offer a number of targeted, non-need-based scholarships.

Mississippi

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	Diploma
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social studies ³	3
Health	.5
Business/technology	1
Arts	1
Electives	4.5
Total	20

Notes: (1) Includes Algebra I and at least one higher-level course. The two-course sequence of Drafting I and II may be used to satisfy one mathematics unit. Students in the 2009 graduating class must earn four units in math, which may include pre-algebra and Algebra I taken in the eighth grade. At least one course must be higher than Algebra I. (2) Includes biology; one unit may be technology applications, agriscience, allied health or aquaculture. Two-course sequences are permitted in agriscience, allied health, aquaculture, forestry, horticulture, plastics and polymer science, and technology applications. (3) World history, U.S. history and government, and Mississippi studies.

High school graduation test: Mississippi administers the Subject Area Testing Program to high school students. The program requires students to pass a series of end-of-course exams in order to graduate. Students take tests in Algebra I, biology, English II and U.S. history. Students have at least three opportunities per year to retake exams they have not passed before graduation.

Early Outreach Programs

The Mississippi Department of Education, Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) and the State Board for Community and Junior Colleges, in conjunction with a variety of local organizations, administer a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program. The program, which targets 31 school districts, provides services in the following areas: family and community engagement; tutoring and mentoring; professional development for teachers, counselors and principals; technology resources; and student access to postsecondary educational opportunities, enrichment, recruitment and financial aid.

MississippiMentor is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.mississippimentor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Students may enroll concurrently in community college and IHL courses while still in high school if they meet the institution's admission requirements. Institutions set standards for early admission based on students' GPAs in college-preparatory courses, ACT scores and recommendations from high school administrators. Students are eligible after their junior year in high school.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements:

Courses	College-Preparatory Curriculum
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social studies ³	3
Advanced electives ⁴	2
Computer applications	.5
Total⁵	15.5

Notes: (1) Includes Algebra I, geometry and Algebra II. (2) Students may choose from biology, advanced biology, chemistry, advanced chemistry, physics and advanced physics or comparably rigorous courses. One unit may be a physical science course that is an introduction to physics and chemistry. Two units must be lab-based. (3) Includes U.S. history, world history, government and either economics or geography. (4) One unit in either foreign language or world geography and one unit chosen from among foreign language, world geography, advanced math and advanced, lab-based science. (5) Beginning in summer 2010, the College-Preparatory Curriculum will add one credit each of math, science, social studies and art.

Unconditional admission is granted to students who complete the 15.5-unit college-preparatory curriculum if they meet one of the following requirements:

- 3.2 GPA on the college-prep curriculum;
- ACT score of 16 and either a 2.5 GPA on the college-preparatory curriculum or class rank in top 50 percent;
- ACT score of 18 and 2.0 GPA on the college-preparatory curriculum; or
- NCAA Division I standards for "full-qualifiers" (for athletes).

University placement requirements: Students who do not meet the requirements for unconditional admission may be admitted but must participate in an on-campus placement process at the institution. Students who are admitted without sufficient skills in English, reading or mathematics are required to enroll in the Summer Development Program. Successful completion of the summer semester program entitles the student to continue enrollment at the university.

Community college admission requirements: Students must have high school diplomas or GED credentials.

Community college placement requirements: Students must present ACT scores or take placement tests to assess English, mathematics and reading skills. Additional testing may be required for specific programs that lead to associate's degrees. Placement standards vary by institution. Students who do not meet institutionally established threshold scores on the tests must take remedial courses.

Feedback Reports

Mississippi does not provide feedback reports from colleges to schools on student admission, placement and performance.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 7 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Mississippi were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

The Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant program provides annual grants of up to \$2,500 to state residents who enter eligible institutions as full-time freshmen. Students must be National Merit/Achievement finalists or semifinalists, or have scores of at least 29 on the ACT (1280 on the SAT) and high school GPAs of 3.5 or higher. The grants may be renewed for eight semesters if students maintain full-time enrollment, state residency and minimum 3.5 GPAs.

The Mississippi Tuition Assistance Grant program provides grants of \$500 per year to freshmen and sophomores and \$1,000 per year to juniors and seniors. To be eligible, entering freshman must be Mississippi residents who are enrolled full time and have high school GPAs of at least 2.5 and ACT scores of at least 15 (or comparable SAT scores). To continue receiving the grant after the freshman year, students must earn at least 12 credits, maintain GPAs of 2.5, and meet residency and enrollment requirements.

Both programs may limit the financial aid benefits a student may receive to the cost of attendance, as established by the institution.

North Carolina

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	CP ¹	CTP ¹	UNIV ¹	OCCUP ¹
English	4	4	4	4
Mathematics ²	3	3	4	3
Science	3	3	3	2
Social studies	3	3	3	2
Health/physical education	1	1	1	1
Foreign language	0	0	2	0
Career technical ³	4	4	0	4
Electives	2	2	3	6
Total	20	20	20	22

Notes: (1) CP indicates Career Preparation; CTP indicates College Technical Preparation; UNIV indicates College/University Preparation; OCCUP indicates Occupational Preparation for students with disabilities who have individual programs of study. These students must complete 300 hours of school-based training and 360 hours of paid employment. Content requirements in English, mathematics, science and social studies are modified to meet student needs.

(2) CTP and UNIV mathematics courses include Algebra I and above; CP includes Algebra I. The UNIV track requires one additional course beyond Algebra II. Students may also meet the UNIV track by taking Integrated Math I, II, III and one higher course.

(3) Units may be earned in career tech, JROTC or art.

High school graduation test: North Carolina requires students to pass end-of-grade tests in reading and mathematics and a computer skills test in order to graduate from high school. These exams are first administered in the eighth-grade, and students have multiple opportunities to retake the tests they have not yet passed before graduation.

Students entering the ninth grade in fall 2006 and beyond in the CP, CTP and UNIV tracks must attain specified achievement levels on five end-of-course (EOC) exams in order to graduate from high school. The EOC exams are Algebra I, biology, English I, civics and economics, and U.S. history. In addition, the exam scores appear on student transcripts and account for at least 25 percent of students' final grades. Students must also complete a graduation project, which consists of a research paper, portfolio and presentation.

Early Outreach Programs

The University of North Carolina system administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program, which targets 20 school districts with high poverty rates and low college-going rates. The program provides tutoring/mentoring, academic planning/preparation, financial aid planning, college tours, professional development and resources for Spanish-speaking students and parents.

The North Carolina Mathematics and Science Education Network Pre-College Program seeks to increase the number of high school graduates ready to pursue mathematics, science and related majors in college. For sixth- through 12th-grade students, it offers academic enrichment during school, Saturday academies, summer programs, leadership training and career activities. It also offers seminars for parents to help them prepare their children for college. North Carolina also offers the Early Mathematics Placement Testing Program to all high schools in the state. It provides a diagnostic test to determine student readiness for college-level mathematics courses. It provides students who take the test with the results and advice about courses to take during the remaining years of high school.

College Foundation of North Carolina (CFNC) is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.cfnc.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school students who are at least 16 years old are eligible to enroll in college courses while remaining in high school. They may enroll in any program of study or continuing education course that does not replace a high school course if space is available. School officials must approve a student's enrollment and must certify that the student is progressing satisfactorily toward graduation. Community college courses are free to high school students, but they must pay tuition and fees at University of North Carolina institutions.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements:

Course	Minimum Requirements ¹
English	4
Mathematics ²	4
Science ³	3
Social studies ⁴	2
Foreign language ⁵	2
Electives	3
Total	18

Notes: (1) Institutions may set higher standards. (2) Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry; Algebra I, Algebra II and one higher course; or Integrated Math I, II, III and one higher course. (3) Includes at least one unit each in a life science and a physical science. At least one unit must be lab-based. (4) Includes U.S. history and one other course. (5) Two units in the same language.

University placement requirements: Universities make decisions regarding placement in remedial/developmental courses. Some universities contract with community colleges to provide remedial courses.

Community college admission requirements: Community colleges have open-door admission policies for applicants who are high school graduates or who are at least 18 years old.

Community college placement requirements: All community colleges require students to take placement tests in reading, writing and mathematics using ASSET, COMPASS or ACCUPLACER. Some community colleges exempt students from testing if they meet institutionally established thresholds on the SAT or ACT. Students who do not meet these thresholds may be asked to enroll in developmental course work.

Two-year college placement requirements: All community colleges require students to take placement tests (ASSET, COMPASS or ACCUPLACER). Some exempt students from testing if they meet institutionally established thresholds on the SAT or ACT. Students who do not pass the placement tests may be asked to take developmental course work.

Feedback Reports

The University of North Carolina System provides schools with three feedback reports: *Freshman Application Report*, *Freshman Performance Report*, and *Retention, Graduation and Persistence Report*. The North Carolina Community College System provides public school systems with *The High School Report*. These reports provide schools with information about admittance and enrollment rates, performance indicators and graduation rates.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 54 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in North Carolina were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

North Carolina does not sponsor a statewide, merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria, but it does offer a number of targeted, non-need-based scholarships.

Oklahoma

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	Diploma
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social studies ³	3
Fine arts	2
Electives	8
Total⁴	23

Notes: (1) Includes Algebra I and two higher-level units. (2) Includes biology and two units in life, physical or earth science, or technology. (3) Includes U.S. history, Oklahoma history and U.S. government. (4) Beginning in 2011, graduating students must earn two credits of either foreign language or computer technology and need only one fine arts credit. Students must still earn 23 credits in order to graduate.

High school graduation test: Oklahoma administers end-of-instruction (EOI) exams in U.S. history, English II, Biology I and Algebra I. Scores appear on students' transcripts, but students do not have to pass the tests to graduate. Beginning with the 2012 graduating class, students must pass EOI exams in English II and Algebra I, plus two additional EOI exams from: Algebra II, Biology I, English III, geometry and U.S. history in order to graduate.

Early Outreach Programs

Oklahoma administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program. The program includes an awareness initiative that promotes the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and ACT Inc. sponsor the Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) statewide. Participating school districts test eighth-graders using the EXPLORE test and 10th-graders using the PLAN test.

Oklahoma is developing OklahomaMentor, a statewide portal that will provide access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site will be www.oklahomamentor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school juniors and seniors who meet college/university admission standards may earn college credit while enrolled concurrently in high school, if the combined courses do not exceed a full-time, college workload. If students want to enroll in English, history, math or science, they must meet minimum ACT scores in those subjects. Students also must have recommendations from their high school counselors, permission from parents/guardians and confirmation from high school principals that they are on track to graduate on time.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: Students must have diplomas from accredited high schools or GED credentials. They also must complete the 15-unit, pre-college core:

Courses	Pre-College Core
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	2
Social studies ³	3
Other ⁴	3
Total	15

Notes: (1) Algebra I and beyond. (2) Lab-based courses in biology, chemistry, physics or other lab-based course certified by the school district. (3) U.S. history and two units chosen from among history,

economics, geography, government, civics and non-Western culture. (4) May be from any of the core subjects listed or from computer science or foreign language.

Students may be admitted to Oklahoma's colleges and universities if they meet various combinations of high school grade-point average, class rank or ACT/SAT score requirements, with two exceptions. An ACT score of 24 (SAT of 1090) can override GPA and class rank at Oklahoma State University, and an ACT score of 20 (SAT of 930) can override GPA and class rank at regional universities. The GPA requirement is calculated based on the 15 pre-college core courses only, except at regional universities for students in the top 50 percent of their class, who may be admitted with nine core courses.

University placement requirements: If students have not completed pre-college curricular requirements, they must satisfy the deficiencies before they take college-level courses. (See **University admission requirements**.) They must have ACT scores of 19 in the subject subtests, pass institutional assessments or take remedial courses in the subjects.

Two-year college admission requirements: Students must have diplomas from accredited high schools or GED credentials and must have taken the ACT, SAT, ACCUPLACER or related institutional tests.

Two-year college placement requirements: Students pursuing associate of arts or associate of science degrees must meet all high school curricular requirements. Those pursuing applied degrees or certificate programs must meet only the curricular requirements that are prerequisites for those programs. If students have not completed pre-college curricular requirements, they must satisfy the deficiencies before they take college-level courses. (See **University admission requirements**.) They must have ACT scores of 19 in the subject subtests, pass institutional assessments or take remedial courses in the subjects.

Feedback Reports

Feedback reports in Oklahoma provide information about the numbers and percentages of high school graduates who apply to college, are accepted and enroll. The reports also include information on how many college-prep courses these graduates completed, their GPAs and class ranks in high school. The reports include scores on college admission tests, the number and percentage of students taking remedial courses by subject, freshman performance and the number of college students who continue from one year to the next.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 28 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Oklahoma were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

The Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program (OHLAP) provides tuition at two- or four-year public institutions in Oklahoma or a comparable amount at eligible private institutions. Eighth-, ninth- and 10th-grade students whose annual family incomes do not exceed \$50,000 may enroll in the program. Students must achieve a 2.5 GPA in a 17-unit high school curriculum as well as a 2.5 overall GPA. In addition to the pre-college core, they must take either two years of foreign language or two years of computer technology; one of the "other" units must be in fine arts or speech. (See **University admission requirements**.) Students must refrain from criminal or delinquent acts and substance abuse. Students must begin using the scholarships within three years of high school graduation. Recipients may receive awards for no more than five years after enrolling in college. To continue receiving the scholarships, students must maintain GPA standards set by colleges.

South Carolina

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	College-Prep
English/language arts	4
Mathematics ¹	4
Science	3
U.S. history/Constitution	1
Economics	.5
U.S. government	.5
Other social studies	1
Physical education/JROTC	1
Computer science ²	1
Career education	0
Foreign language	1
Electives	7
Total³	24

Notes: (1) Includes Algebra I (or equivalent) and above. (2) Students must demonstrate computer literacy before graduation. (3) Students must choose either the foreign language or the career education unit.

High school graduation test: Students must pass both math and language arts subtests of the comprehensive High School Assessment Program (HASP), which is first administered to 10th-graders. Students have at least four opportunities to take the subtests they have not yet passed before graduation. The HSAP replaced the Basic Skills Assessment Program beginning with the graduating class of 2006.

South Carolina also administers end-of-course (EOC) exams in four subjects. Algebra I, English I and physical science EOC exam scores account for 20 percent of students' final grades for the courses. The fourth EOC exam, U.S. history, will account for 20 percent of students' final grades for the course beginning in fall 2007.

Early Outreach Programs

The South Carolina Commission on Higher Education administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program. The program works with the South Carolina Governor's School for Science and Mathematics, South Carolina Educational Television and the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce to provide focused interventions in academic and personal development, as well as mentoring/tutoring for sixth- and seventh-grade students. GEAR UP and its partners have developed a dissemination network to provide information to students and parents through Web sites and compact discs.

The Commission on Higher Education also administers the Higher Education Awareness Program (HEAP), which provides eighth-grade students and their parents/guardians with information about college.

Current eighth-grade students must choose a non-binding career path by spring 2007. They may choose from a variety of career clusters, including agriculture, finance, law and marketing. Beginning in fall 2007, statewide high school curricula will be organized around career clusters.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Juniors and seniors in high school who have nearly mastered the complete high school curriculum are eligible to enroll jointly in college-level courses. All dual enrollment students must have the recommendations of their high school principals. To enroll in courses at four-year institutions and two-year regional campuses of the University of South Carolina, students must have 3.0 grade-point averages. To enroll in courses at technical colleges, students must meet the requirements set by the institution.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: College-preparatory course requirements are listed at right. Each institution may make exceptions

for students, including those who completed the tech-prep program, as long as they meet all other criteria for admission.

Courses	College-Preparatory Curriculum
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social science ³	3
Foreign language ⁴	2
Physical education/JROTC	1
Electives ⁵	4
Total	20

Notes: (1) Includes Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry. Freshmen entering in fall 2011 must earn a fourth math credit. (2) Lab-based; must be in at least two different fields chosen from among biology, chemistry and physics. (3) Includes one unit of U.S. history. (4) Two units in the same foreign language. (5) Must be in at least three different fields, chosen from among computer science; English; fine arts; foreign language; humanities; social science; higher-level, lab-based science; and higher-level mathematics.

University placement requirements: Institutions set policies regarding student placement. Universities may partner with community colleges to provide remedial courses or provide "enriched" entry-level courses for students with deficiencies.

Technical college admission requirements: Students must be at least 18 years old and have high school diplomas or the equivalent. Students may present qualifying SAT or ACT scores or participate in placement testing.

Technical college placement requirements: Students must take institutionally determined placement tests in reading, English and mathematics. If they do not meet institutional thresholds, they must complete remedial courses prior to taking college-level courses.

Feedback Reports

The South Carolina Department of Education compiles a report on the numbers and percentages of high school graduates who attend college. The report indicates the numbers of college courses that students passed or failed or for which they received no credit, as well as the passing rates in courses by subject area.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 19 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in South Carolina were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

To be eligible for the scholarships listed below, students must be South Carolina residents who are pursuing degrees full time in a public or private college in the state. They must be free of felony or alcohol-related convictions and must not be in default on federal or state financial aid loans. **Palmetto Fellows Scholarships** provide a maximum of \$6,700 per year at four-year institutions. Students must have: 1200 SAT or 27 ACT; 3.5 GPA after 11th grade; and rank in the top 6 percent of their high school class after either 10th or 11th grade. **LIFE Scholarships** are available for students at four-year, two-year and technical institutions. The scholarships provide tuition up to \$4,700 plus a \$300 book allowance. Students must meet two of the following requirements: 1100 SAT or 24 ACT; 3.0 GPA; or top 30 percent of graduating class. Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholars must maintain a 3.0 GPA and earn 30 credit hours toward graduation each academic year. **South Carolina HOPE Scholarships** provide a one-time maximum award of \$2,500 plus a \$150 book allowance to entering freshmen who had high school GPAs of 3.0.

Tennessee

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses ¹	University-Prep	Tech-Prep
English	4	4
Mathematics ²	3	3
Science ³	3	3
Social studies ⁴	3	3
Wellness	1	1
Foreign language ⁵	2	0
Fine arts	1	0
Technical area	0	4
Electives	3	2
Total	20	20

Notes: (1) Students may graduate with honors if they earn grade-point averages (GPA) of 3.0 and meet local school district requirements. (2) All students must take at least one course from Algebra I, technical algebra or Integrated Math I. University-prep students must complete Algebra I, Algebra II, and geometry or one higher-level math course. Students graduating in 2009 will be required to complete at least one course from Algebra II, geometry, Integrated Math II or technical geometry. (3) Includes biology. (4) Includes U.S. history, world history/geography, economics and government. (5) Both units must be in the same foreign language.

High school graduation test: Tennessee administers end-of-course (EOC) exams in Algebra I, biology, English I, English II, Math Foundations II, physical science and U.S. history. All scores account for 20 percent of students' final grades.

Students must pass EOC exams in Algebra I, biology and English II in order to graduate. These three EOC exams comprise the Gateway Assessment Program. Students have multiple opportunities to retake the exams. School systems must provide extra help sessions, one of which must be held during the school day for students who have not yet passed one or more Gateway exams.

Early Outreach Programs

The Department of Education and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission jointly administer a federally funded GEAR UP grant, which is designed to prepare high school students for college and enhance awareness of the need to expand access to postsecondary education statewide.

CollegeforTN is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.collegefortn.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

High school students have three options for enrolling in college-level courses: (1) Early admission may be granted to students who meet institutional requirements. (2) Juniors and seniors may jointly enroll in college-level courses. (3) Local boards of education may provide jointly delivered college-level courses during the school day on the high school campus.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

College and university admission requirements: Students must have high school diplomas or pass the GED test with scores that meet institutional requirements. Institutions determine admissions criteria, including required GPAs and ACT or SAT scores. Students who apply to universities must pass the following courses in high school, or they will be required to remove deficiencies within the first 60 hours of university-level course work.

Courses	Minimum Requirements
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	2
Social science ³	2
Foreign language ⁴	2
Fine arts	1
Total	14

Notes: (1) Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry, or higher. (2) One unit must be lab-based. (3) Includes U.S. history. (4) Two units in the same foreign language.

Community college admission requirements: Students must have high school diplomas or pass the GED test with scores that meet institutional requirements, and they must take the ACT, SAT or COMPASS.

College/university and community college placement requirements:

The Tennessee Board of Regents requires degree-seeking students who have ACT subject scores below 19 in the areas of English, reading and math to enroll in developmental studies courses. Students may bypass remediation if they submit qualifying scores on ASSET and/or COMPASS placement exams. Institutions within the University of Tennessee System may establish specific remediation placement requirements and placement exam threshold scores.

Feedback Reports

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission, in collaboration with ACT Inc., distributes annual reports to high schools, school districts and higher education institutions on the collegiate performance of recent high school graduates. These reports, which are limited to outcomes that Tennessee's ACT-tested public and private high school graduates achieve while attending public colleges and universities in the state, contain the following indicators: college enrollment by prior-year high school graduates; average ACT scores; first-term and cumulative college GPAs; average college course load; and persistence into the second year of college. Results are reported for students who took the ACT-recommended high school core curriculum and for those who did not.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 93 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Tennessee were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

The Tennessee Lottery Scholarship program, begun in 2004, awards HOPE Scholarships to resident graduates of approved high schools enrolled in approved Tennessee public or private institutions. Only students going directly into a postsecondary institution are eligible, unless they are entering from active-duty military service.

The HOPE Scholarship provides \$3,800 per year for students at four-year institutions and \$1,900 per year for students at two-year institutions. Students must have a score of 21 on the ACT (or 980 on the SAT) or a 3.0 unweighted high school GPA. Students must maintain a 2.75 college GPA to renew the HOPE Scholarship after 24 credit-hours and a 3.0 GPA to renew after 48 credit-hours and beyond. HOPE Scholars may also qualify for supplemental awards, including the \$1,000 General Assembly Merit Scholarship and the \$1,500 Need-Based Supplemental Award.

The HOPE Access Grant goes to students who earn a 2.75 unweighted high school GPA, score an 18 on the ACT (860 on the SAT) and have an annual household income of \$36,000 or less. These nonrenewable grants provide \$2,650 for students at four-year institutions and \$1,700 for those at two-year colleges.

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses ¹	Minimum	Recommended	Distinguished ²
English	4	4	4
Mathematics ³	3	3	3
Science ⁴	2	3	3
Social studies	2.5	3.5	3.5
Economics	.5	.5	.5
Foreign language ⁵	0	2	3
Health/physical education	2	2	2
Speech	.5	.5	.5
Tech applications	1	1	1
Fine arts	0	1	1
Academic elective	1	0	0
Electives	5.5	3.5	2.5
Total	22	24	24

Notes: (1) Students graduating in 2008 and beyond must complete the recommended curriculum — except students with special permission, who must meet minimum standards. (2) The Distinguished diploma also requires students to achieve high standards in four courses as evidenced by passing Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate end-of-course exams, earning Bs in dual enrollment courses or completing advanced research. (3) Minimum standard includes Algebra I and geometry. Recommended and Distinguished diplomas currently require Algebra I, Algebra II and geometry and will require a fourth unit of math for ninth-graders entering in fall 2007. (4) One unit of biology is required; students may choose other courses from among integrated physics, chemistry and physics. Recommended and Distinguished diplomas will require a fourth unit of science for ninth-graders entering in fall 2007. (5) Foreign language credits must be earned in the same language.

High school graduation test: Students must pass all portions of the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) in order to graduate. The TAKS subtests (mathematics, English language arts, science and social studies) are first administered to 11th-grade students. Students have multiple opportunities to earn passing scores.

Early Outreach Programs

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program called STAR (Students Training for Academic Readiness). The effort is a partnership among the TEA, the College Board, the National Hispanic Institute and other community groups, in cooperation with Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and Texas A&M University-Kingsville. STAR's goals include building awareness of postsecondary opportunities among students and their families, increasing student access to advanced academics, offering professional development for teachers and counselors regarding differentiated instruction and assistance with postsecondary choices, and ensuring parental involvement in the college-choice process and community and family recognition of the importance of postsecondary education.

The College for Texans campaign is a project of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The goal of the campaign is to increase the percentage of Texas high school graduates enrolling in college. The campaign provides information for parents/guardians and for middle grades and high school students on preparing, applying and paying for college. The project also provides materials to schools and other organizations to help them promote college readiness, financial aid options and postsecondary education to Texas students.

TexasMentor (www.texasmentor.org) and College for Texans (www.collegefortexans.com) are statewide portals that provide access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Texas allows concurrent enrollment (college credit only) and dual enrollment (credit in both high school and college) in college courses. To be eligible, high school students must meet the minimum requirements as defined by the Texas Success Initiative.

If students have scored high enough on the SAT, ACT or TAKS, they are not required to take the state-mandated assessment to qualify for concurrent or dual enrollment. Students may take college-level courses related to the parts of the assessment they have passed.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

University admission requirements: For admission, a student must hold a high school diploma. The top 10 percent of graduates from each Texas high school are guaranteed admission to one of Texas' public undergraduate institutions. For other applicants, institutions set the admission requirements, which generally include a combination of class rank and ACT or SAT scores.

University placement requirements: Students are required to meet one of the following minimum requirements before they enroll in college-level classes:

- ACT — 23, with a minimum score of 19 in both English and mathematics;
- SAT I — 1070, with a minimum score of 500 in both critical reading and mathematics;
- TAKS — with a minimum score of 2200 in both mathematics and English and a writing subscore of at least 3.

If students fail to meet the above requirements, they are required to take a placement test (ASSET, COMPASS, ACCUPLACER or the Texas Higher Education Assessment) and meet minimum thresholds. Those who do not meet these thresholds must enroll in developmental courses in the subjects they failed.

Community college admission requirements: Students must have high school diplomas or GED credentials. Those without diplomas or the equivalent must pass institutionally determined tests to demonstrate that they can benefit from instruction.

Community college placement requirements: Placement requirements for courses applicable to degree programs and transferable among colleges are the same as university requirements. (See **University placement requirements**.) Vocational programs require tests in reading, mathematics and English. Institutions set requirements for remediation.

Feedback Reports

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's *First-time Undergraduate Applicant, Acceptance and Enrollment Information* report provides high schools with information about the numbers and percentages of their graduates who applied, were accepted and enrolled in college. The *TSI Summary of Exemptions and Waivers* provides information about student test scores exemptions.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 79 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Texas were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

Texas does not sponsor a statewide, merit-based scholarship program that guarantees funding to all students who meet specified criteria.

Virginia

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses ¹	Standard	Advanced Studies
English	4	4
Mathematics ²	3	4
Science ³	3	4
History/social science ⁴	3	4
Health/physical education	2	2
Foreign language	0	3
Art	1	1
Electives	6	2
Total	22	24

Notes: (1) Students with disabilities may receive modified standard diplomas or special diplomas. (2) Includes Algebra I and above; additional courses must be geometry, Algebra II or higher-level courses. (3) All must be lab-based and chosen from among biology, chemistry, physics and earth science. Credits must be in at least two disciplines for the standard diploma and at least three disciplines for the advanced diploma. International Baccalaureate diploma requirements in science may substitute. (4) Includes U.S. and Virginia history, U.S. and Virginia government, and a world history/geography course. The Advanced Studies diploma requires an additional course in world history and geography.

High school graduation test: Virginia administers Standards of Learning (SOL) end-of-course exams in English, mathematics, science, and history/social science. Students receiving a standard diploma must verify six course credits by passing SOL exams or state-approved alternate exams in reading, writing, mathematics, history/social science, science, and one student-selected test. Students receiving an Advanced Studies diploma must verify nine course credits by passing two tests each in English, mathematics, history/social science and science, plus one student-selected test. Students also may substitute state-approved alternate assessments — such as Advanced Placement and career/technical certification tests — to meet graduation requirements. Students receive multiple opportunities to earn passing scores.

Early Outreach Programs

The State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program to help low-income students in 47 elementary and middle grades schools prepare for college. It provides early intervention through summer activities on college campuses, neighborhood academics and parental-involvement initiatives; professional development for teachers and counselors; and scholarships for eligible participants.

VirginiaMentor is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.virginiamentor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

Virginia provides high school students with dual credit opportunities. These college-credit courses generally are offered by community colleges and taught on both community college campuses and at high schools. Some four-year institutions allow high school students to enroll in classes. Students must obtain approval from high school principals and must be accepted by the colleges for admission to the courses.

The Early College Scholars program allows 11th- and 12th-graders to earn at least 15 transferable college credits. To qualify for the program, students must be Advanced Studies diploma candidates, have at least a B average and have the approval of their parents/guardians, high school principals and counselors.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

College and university admission requirements: Admission requirements vary by institution. Colleges and universities consider high school students' curricula, grade-point averages, SAT scores and class ranks. Students must take the SAT, and institutions set the threshold scores for admission. Institutions require students to have taken four English courses, but their requirements in other subjects vary. Institutions require two to four courses in mathematics, science and social science; the foreign language units required generally range from one to three.

College and university placement requirements: Institutions make decisions about placement testing and set score thresholds.

Community college admission requirements: Students may enroll at community colleges if they have high school diplomas or the equivalent or if they pass institutionally determined tests to demonstrate their ability to benefit from instruction.

Community college placement requirements: Students must take placement tests before enrolling in courses that lead to college credit. These tests also are used to determine students' placement in mathematics and English classes. The tests used and the score requirements vary by institution.

Feedback Reports

Virginia's colleges and universities do not report to high schools about student admission, placement and performance.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 42 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in Virginia were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

The Virginia Guaranteed Assistance Program (VGAP) provides additional merit-based state grants to Commonwealth-eligible, full-time students who have financial need (as determined by the institutions), are classified as dependent students for federal financial aid purposes and graduate from high school with GPAs of 2.5. The program's purpose is to encourage financially needy students in elementary and secondary schools to raise their expectations and their academic performance and to consider higher education as an achievable objective. The award amount varies based on need, but the maximum awards cover tuition and fees, plus a book allowance. In order to renew the awards, students must maintain a 2.0 GPA and demonstrate continued financial need.

West Virginia

High School Graduation Requirements

Courses	Diploma
English	4
Mathematics ¹	3
Science ²	3
Social studies ³	3
Physical education/health	2
Arts	1
Career major ⁴	4
Electives ⁵	4
Total⁶	24

Notes: (1) Includes Algebra I and one higher course. Students in the 2010 graduating class must earn four math units. (2) Includes Coordinated and Thematic Science 9 and 10. (3) Includes U.S. history, world studies and modern history. Beginning with the class of 2008, students must earn a fourth social studies unit. (4) Career majors are currently determined at the local school or county level. Beginning with the class of 2008, students choose one of three four-unit career majors, or “pathways.” The Professional Pathway requires one additional unit of mathematics above Algebra I, one additional unit of science and two units in the same foreign language. The Skilled Pathway requires one additional unit of mathematics above Algebra I and three units in an academic or mechanical/career concentration. The Entry Pathway requires four units in an academic or career/technical concentration. (5) Electives will be reduced to three units for 2008 graduates as the social studies requirement increases. (6) All students must participate in a work-based learning experience. Local districts determine content standards and credits awarded.

High school graduation test: West Virginia does not require students to take a test to qualify for graduation. School districts determine policy on end-of-course exams in core subjects.

Early Outreach Programs

The West Virginia Department of Education administers a statewide, federally funded GEAR UP program that focuses on middle grades students in eight counties. Its goals are to prepare students for post-secondary education; to develop alliances among schools, colleges, government and community groups; to provide information about college opportunities; and to strengthen academic programs. Seventh- and eighth-graders can earn scholarships of up to \$500, to be held for them until they are ready for college.

West Virginia also has adopted ACT’s Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) for eighth- and 10th-graders.

WestVirginiaMentor is a statewide portal that provides access to online resources for students and their families to help them plan, apply and pay for college. Its Web site is www.wvmentor.org.

Joint Enrollment/Early Admission

West Virginia colleges allow high school students to take college-level courses on college campuses and at high schools. Students must meet the institution’s admission requirements and be approved by the school principal. The colleges offering these courses for high school students must make arrangements with the high school for awarding of dual credit.

Postsecondary Admission/Placement

College/university admission requirements: Admission to institutions that offer programs leading to bachelor’s degrees requires: (1) a high school diploma or GED credential; (2) a high school grade-point average of at least 2.0 or an ACT composite score of at least 17; and (3) completion of the minimum academic core curriculum. Effective fall 2008, the ACT score requirement will increase to a minimum of 18 at four-year institutions.

Courses	Minimum Academic Core ¹
English	4
Mathematics ²	3
Science ³	3
Social studies ⁴	3

Notes: (1) Effective fall 2008, the required core will include four units in mathematics, including Algebra I plus two higher courses, three lab-based science units, one unit in the arts and two units of the same foreign language. (2) Includes Algebra I and at least one higher unit. (3) Two units must be lab-based. (4) Includes U.S. history.

University placement requirements: Students must meet thresholds on assessments to avoid taking remedial courses in math and English. (See chart below.) Institutions are encouraged to assist students who do not meet the reading standards.

	Mathematics ¹	Reading	English/Writing ²
ACT	19	17	18
SAT	460	420 ³	450 ³
ASSET	40/38	36	38
COMPASS	59/36	75	71
ACCUPLACER	85/84	79	88
Nelson-Denney ⁴	30th percentile		

Notes: (1) ASSET subscores for the numerical/elementary algebra subtests; COMPASS subscores for pre-algebra/algebra; ACCUPLACER subscores for arithmetic/elementary algebra. (2) Placement also depends on institutionally developed writing assessments. (3) The critical reading SAT score is used for both English and reading placement. (4) Nelson-Denney Reading Inventory.

Community college admission requirements: To enroll in community colleges and in four-year institutions’ community college divisions, students must have earned high school diplomas or GED credentials. Those without diplomas must pass a test designed to determine whether they are able to benefit from instruction.

Community college placement requirements: The ACT, SAT and ASSET tests are used for placement. Institutions set the threshold scores. Students whose scores are not satisfactory must complete remedial courses before they take college-level courses.

Feedback Reports

The West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission publishes *Performance of High School Students Enrolled in Public Colleges and Universities*. The report provides each high school with data on college-going rates, percentage of graduates enrolled, freshman GPAs, credits attempted and enrollment in remedial instruction.

State Need- and Merit-Based Aid

In 2004-2005, 31 percent of funds for state student financial aid programs in West Virginia were categorized as need-based. (Source: *SREB Fact Book on Higher Education*, based on National Association of State Schools and Grant Aid Programs, 36th Annual Survey.)

The PROMISE (Providing Real Opportunities for Maximizing In-State Student Excellence) Scholarship offers full tuition and fees to a state institution or a maximum award of \$3,758 toward attending an in-state private college. West Virginia high school graduates must meet two eligibility requirements: (1) a 3.0 GPA in core and overall high school course work; and (2) an ACT composite score of at least 22, with minimum scores of 20 in each subject (or equivalent SAT scores). The PROMISE core is aligned with university admission requirements. To renew the award, full-time enrollees must earn a 2.75 GPA in the first year and a cumulative 3.0 GPA thereafter.

The following reports may be found on the SREB Web site at www.sreb.org.

■ **Challenge to Lead Education Goals Series**

Building a Foundation for Success by Getting Every Child Ready for School

This report reviews SREB states' progress in getting young children prepared to start first grade ready to learn. SREB states have a long history in this endeavor, particularly in addressing the needs of young children from low-income families. The report documents that this group of children is increasing, profiles SREB states' efforts to meet standards set for high-quality preschool programs and shows how SREB states assess school readiness. The report also addresses health and social services that are available in SREB states to children at risk of not being ready for school.

Mastering Reading and Mathematics in the Early Grades

This report documents SREB states' progress in getting early grades students ready for the middle grades. The analyses are based on scores and standards for state achievement tests and on results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The report also outlines how federal funds for reading programs are distributed to districts and schools, what states are requiring of students who do not meet state standards at the end of third or fourth grade, and what retention and promotion policies states have developed for students who do not meet standards.

Getting the Mission Right in the Middle Grades

This report documents SREB states' progress in getting middle grades students ready for high school. The analyses are based on scores and standards of state achievement tests and on results from the National Assessment of Educational Progress. The report also describes promising practices for preparing middle grades students for high school, based on technology applications that have been implemented in SREB states and on the work of SREB's *Making Middle Grades Work*.

Getting Serious About High School Graduation

This report documents that graduation rates are low — especially for minority students and males — and that rates have declined since the 1980s. Additionally, too few young adults who need them receive alternative credentials, such as the GED. The report explains how graduation rates are calculated and offers promising practices for increasing them by improving accountability systems, focusing on the ninth grade, reforming high schools and developing media campaigns to promote graduation.

Getting Students Ready for College and Careers

As a companion to *Getting Serious About High School Graduation*, this report asserts that SREB states need to ensure that all graduates are ready for further education and the workplace. It concludes that all students should take an essential core of courses traditionally prescribed only for college-bound students, including four years of mathematics including Algebra II. The report describes where SREB states stand on graduation requirements, college admission exams, achievement gaps and advanced course-taking, and it offers strategies to help states improve readiness rates and reduce the need for remediation in college.

Investing Wisely in Adult Learning is Key to State Prosperity

This report documents the benefits of providing more education for adults who did not complete high school and the urgency of increasing the number of high school dropouts who pursue further education. It focuses on three key indicators of progress: enrollments in Adult Basic Education, GED completion and enrollments of students who earned the GED credential in postsecondary education. Some SREB

states have made strides in developing policies and programs for adult learners, and the report profiles their efforts and results. The report offers some promising practices for addressing the adult learning challenge facing SREB states.

Creating College Opportunity for All: Prepared Students and Affordable Colleges

SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals call on states to ensure that many more youth — particularly from minority groups and low-income families — prepare for, enroll in and graduate from college. This means that college must be affordable for these students. This report examines the current affordability gap and what steps could make college a possibility for more young people. It focuses on the need for state-funded financial assistance and ways that states can help prepare a new generation of residents for the future.

Focusing on Student Performance Through Accountability

SREB states face new challenges as they adapt to the requirements of the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*. This report reviews SREB states' progress in implementing their accountability systems and in improving student performance for all groups. The report documents that many states may not be improving performance at adequate rates to meet the legislation's 2014 deadline. It discusses Title 1 and non-Title 1 schools and includes state profiles of performance data for each state compared with *NCLB* targets.

Progress Being Made in Getting a Quality Leader in Every School

This report documents SREB states' progress in redesigning the preparation and development of school principals. The analyses are based on information collected in interviews with state agency personnel on six key indicators. The report also outlines actions that states can take to make progress on each indicator, describes promising practices being implemented by some states and identifies challenges states face in creating new policies that can drive more effective programs and practices.

Resolve and Resources to Get a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom

Every student deserves qualified teachers, but states do not have enough qualified teachers for every subject in every school. This report documents SREB states' progress toward getting a qualified teacher in every classroom. It highlights the essential policies that SREB states should resolve to develop and support with adequate resources.

Holding Colleges and Universities Accountable for Meeting State Needs

SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals call for states to hold colleges and universities accountable for meeting state needs. This report looks at states' annual reports for higher education accountability and recommends that states develop public agendas for higher education. It also describes states' progress on key indicators: higher education graduation rates, faculty salaries, and science and research funding. SREB states have improved, but much work remains to be done.

From Goals to Results: Improving Education System Accountability

SREB's *Challenge to Lead* goals call for states to encourage early childhood programs, K-12 schools, community and technical colleges, two- and four-year colleges, universities and adult education to work together *as a system*. This includes helping students make smooth transitions to the next education level, building statewide education data systems and achieving real-dollar growth in state budgets for K-12 and higher education. This report concludes the first series of reports on each *Challenge to Lead* goal. It includes recommendations and an action agenda, *From Goals to Results ... Making It Happen*.

Challenge to Lead Goals for Education

The reports listed below for each goal, and other reports on the goals, are found at www.sreb.org.

1. All children are ready for the first grade.
Building a Foundation for Success by Getting Every Child Ready for School
2. Achievement in the early grades for all groups of students exceeds national averages and performance gaps are closed.
Mastering Reading and Mathematics in the Early Grades
3. Achievement in the middle grades for all groups of students exceeds national averages and performance gaps are closed.
Getting the Mission Right in the Middle Grades
4. All young adults have a high school diploma — or, if not, pass the GED tests.
Getting Serious About High School Graduation
5. All recent high school graduates have solid academic preparation and are ready for post-secondary education and a career.
Getting Students Ready for College and Careers
6. Adults who are not high school graduates participate in literacy and job-skills training and further education.
Investing Wisely in Adult Learning is Key to State Prosperity
7. The percentage of adults who earn postsecondary degrees or technical certificates exceeds national averages.
Creating College Opportunity for All: Prepared Students and Affordable Colleges
8. Every school has higher student performance and meets state academic standards for all students each year.
Focusing on Student Performance Through Accountability
9. Every school has leadership that results in improved student performance — and leadership begins with an effective school principal.
Progress Being Made in Getting a Quality Leader in Every School
10. Every student is taught by qualified teachers.
Resolve and Resources to Get a Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom
11. The quality of colleges and universities is regularly assessed and funding is targeted to quality, efficiency and state needs.
Holding Colleges and Universities Accountable for Meeting State Needs
12. The state places a high priority on an education system of schools, colleges and universities that is accountable.
From Goals to Results: Improving Education System Accountability

The Southern Regional Education Board has established these Goals for Education. They are built on the groundbreaking education goals SREB adopted in 1988 and on an ongoing effort to promote actions and measure progress. The new goals raise further the sights of the 16 SREB states and challenge them to lead the nation.

